



Ohio

Chemical Dependency
Professionals Board

OHIO CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY PROFESSIONALS BOARD POSITION STATEMENT

RE: Code of Ethical Practice and Professional Conduct regarding social media/Facebook

Purpose: The purpose of this Position Statement is to provide information to the public and Board employees regarding social media, including following and adding clients.

OAC 4758-8-1 (A) The following rules of conduct set forth the *minimum* standards ...

(B) A violation of rules of ethical practice and professional conduct constitutes unprofessional conduct and is sufficient reason [for sanctions] ...

(6)(c) "A licensee or certificate holder *shall* avoid multiple relationships and conflicts of interest with any current or past clients, family members of current or past clients or other persons encountered in a professional setting which are not in the best interest of the client and might impair professional judgment or which increase the risk of client exploitation which includes but is not limited to accepting gifts, bartering for services, accepting free services or accepting discounts on services."

Application:

Certification/license holders that request and/or add a client as a friend/follower, comment or "like" posts, or otherwise communicate with a current or past client, their family member, or other persons encountered in a professional setting (hereinafter respectively referred to as "client" or "clients") on social media platform(s) directly violate of the code of ethics. Such acts blur the lines of professionalism, creates a multiple relationship with the client, and is direct evidence of the certification/license holder's intent to create a social relationship outside of the professional relationship that may not in the best interest of the client, innately impairs professional judgment, and inherently increases the risk of client exploitation.


For example, looking a client up on social media and looking at their publicly posted content is public knowledge. But there is a presumption that the lines between the client's and certification/license holder's personal life and professional relationship are blurred by adding them as a friend on Facebook.

A note to certification/license holders – posts made on social media platform(s) that are public, can be seen by clients, unless posts are made private. By following/adding clients on social media platform(s), a certification/license holder opens their personal life up to the client that has been added, as well as gives the certification/license holder insight into the client's life that the client may not have openly told the certification holder.

Definitions:

Past client: a client that received treatment within the past 365 days.

Social media platform(s): A system for disseminating information over the Internet to a selected group of followers and include, but are not limited to, the following: Instagram, Facebook, Dating Apps, TikTok, YouTube, WhatsApp, Snap Chat, Pinterest, Reddit, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.

Title:	Code of Ethical Practice and Professional Conduct regarding social media/Facebook
Type:	Position Statement
Related References:	n/a
Legal References:	See references within Position Statement, if any. ORC: 4758.02, 4758.20 OAC: 4758-8-01
Supersedes:	Prior versions.
Effective Date:	April 17, 2023
Next Review Date:*	September 1, 2025
Implementation Date:	April 17, 2023
Approved:	Jill Smock, Executive Director on behalf of the Board by direct authority  (ratification of action by the Board on 8.17.22)

* The Executive Director, or designee, shall review position, policy, and procedures statements (collectively Statements) on or before the stated review date listed above and if applicable, make any necessary revisions in accordance with any Board Statements regarding development, review, dissemination and acknowledgement.

Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 4758.15, the Executive Director (ED) has been granted discretionary authority on behalf of the Board to develop, implement, maintain, and amend position statements to support rules, policies, and position statements.

Unless otherwise stated, all employees, Board members, and contractors for the Board (collectively Board employees) shall follow all laws, rules, policies, and procedures. A Board employee may be subject to discipline up to and including removal for violating laws, rules, policies, and procedures.

Definitions as stated in Chapters 4758 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) and Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) are incorporated by reference herein.

Helpful Links

Ohio Revised Code: <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/chapter-4758>

Ohio Administrative Code: <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-administrative-code/4758>

This statement is issued by the Ohio Chemical Dependency Professionals Board ("Board") in response to a prospective or hypothetical question. BE AWARE of the following:

- This statement is provided for information or educational purposes only.
- The Board is solely responsible for the content of this statement, which is only the opinion of the Board, and any Board guidance provided does not reflect the opinion of any court or interpretation of law.
- This statement is not and shall not be construed as legal advice and shall not be relied upon.
- This statement has no binding effect.

Questions regarding this Board statement should be directed to independent legal counsel.